

House to Unveil New Health Care Bill Over the Weekend

According to reports, Republican leaders in the House of Representatives are “close” to having a deal on a new bill to begin the process of repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare.

The goal, according to those reports, is to distribute the text of the bill Friday and over the weekend in order to have another showdown vote over the measure next week prior to the end of President Donald Trump’s first 100 days in office. The reports state the leadership was “close” to having the votes to pass it out of the House, but many legislators want to see the bill before they commit to voting for it.

Politico reports the president “seems more engaged” this time around than he was for the first effort, which failed to get enough GOP support to move ahead to the Senate. Democrats are marching in lockstep in opposition to any changes to Obamacare, claiming it doesn’t need to be replace, despite widespread loss of insurers and skyrocketing out-of-pocket costs for average Americans.

That report states:

The deal—brokered by centrist Tuesday Group co-chair Tom MacArthur of New Jersey and hard-right Freedom Caucus head Mark Meadows of North Carolina—proposes giving states more flexibility to opt out of major Obamacare provisions, while preserving popular protections like the law’s ban on discrimination against people with pre-existing conditions.

Congress has spent the past two weeks on its Easter recess, but will be returning with mere days left to avoid a budget impasse that could lead to a shutdown of the federal government. The president has been seeking regular

updates—sometimes multiple times a day—on the “whip count” on the bill. He has said fixing health care is a prerequisite to his tax reform plan. {eoa}